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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 000715

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: IRISH RESPONSE TO PRE-GAERC DEMARCHE

REF: A. STATE 105235

[B](#). DUBLIN 683

[C](#). DUBLIN 598

[D](#). STATE 106113

[E](#). JOYCE-YOUNG E-MAIL OF JUNE 8.

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Jonathan S. Benton, Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On June 8, Post delivered ref A talking points to Gerard Keown, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) EU correspondent. Keown said that the GOI might contribute police personnel to the EU's planned Rule of Law training program for the Iraqi Transitional Government, but would not likely decide before the June 21-22 U.S.-EU conference on Iraq. He also conveyed Ireland's hopes that EU-3 diplomacy would yield a final deal with Iran, that the Balkan countries would undertake reforms necessary for integration into the European Union, and that the June 20 U.S.-EU Summit would yield concrete results, including a positive economic declaration. Regarding the EU Constitution, Keown commented that the French and Dutch referenda had disappointed the GOI, but did not pose a crisis for Europe. End summary.

Iraq

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[1](#)2. (C) Ireland might make available police personnel to the EU's planned Rule of Law training program for the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG), said Keown. The GOI, however, would not likely decide on this possibility before the June 21-22 U.S.-EU conference on Iraq, as the GOI was not planning to announce new forms of support for the ITG at the conference (per ref B). Keown cited international recognition for Ireland's policing tradition, as reflected in UNSYG Annan's appointment of Ireland's Deputy Police Commissioner, Peter Fitzgerald, to head the UN investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. The fact that Irish police conducted most of their domestic duties unarmed posed a challenge, however, for Ireland's participation in the EU Rule of Law program. Keown explained that Irish police trainers might not be the best fit for an Iraqi police force that will have to carry weapons.

Iran

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[1](#)3. (C) EU-3 diplomacy with Iran remained on track and would hopefully yield a final deal satisfactory to all sides, said Keown. He noted that Iran's statement in May about its intention to resume uranium conversion work was a concern, but should be viewed primarily in the context of Iran's June 17 presidential poll (with candidates reluctant to show weakness in the face of international pressure). Keown ventured that the Iranian Government approached the nuclear issue as a matter of national pride and as a legal entitlement under the NPT, which allowed for the civilian use of nuclear energy. Iran also saw the issue as a strategic opportunity to assert itself in a region undergoing significant change, particularly with the ascendancy of the Shia community in Iraq. Keown cited views expressed by Ireland's representatives at the NPT Review Conference that efforts by nuclear powers to reduce their weapons arsenals would help to discourage non-nuclear states from developing such weapons.

The Balkans

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[1](#)4. (C) Ireland agreed fully with ref A points on the Balkans and welcomed Under Secretary Burns' June 7-9 visit to the region, said Keown. He noted the GOI's view that the EU had important contributions to make to the UN-led process of resolving Kosovo's status. The 2003 Thessaloniki Agenda for the Western Balkans had set forth political and economic prescriptions for integration of the region's countries into the European Union, and Ireland hoped that more progress could be achieved on those fronts. The GOI also saw Belgrade's attitude as central to the Kosovo status issue, but was concerned that Montenegro's possible referendum in 2006 on independence from Serbia would influence Belgrade's capacity and willingness to play a more constructive role with Kosovo.

China

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15. (C) There had been no changes in Ireland's position on the EU arms embargo against China (which supports the embargo's removal, per ref C), according to Keown. He asserted that technical-level discussions on the Code of Conduct were at an advanced stage, but had not yet been finalized. Ireland did not expect EU movement, however, on lifting the arms embargo "in the immediate future." Keown observed that the GOI was pleased with the start of the U.S.-EU strategic dialogue on East Asia and hoped that such exchanges could be regularized and perhaps expanded at some point to cover the overlap of security and economic issues.

U.S.-EU Summit

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16. (C) Ireland anticipated a positive, concrete outcome to the June 20 U.S.-EU Summit that would advance trans-Atlantic cooperation and build on the joint declarations reached at the 2004 Summit hosted by Ireland, said Keown. He confirmed receiving from Emboff on June 7 a copy of ref D talking points regarding the Summit's draft economic declaration, which he had discussed with DFA's EU External Relations Division (the office responsible within DFA for trans-Atlantic economic issues). The Division had seen, and supported, the response to the points provided by Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment (DETE) Senior Trade Negotiator, Tony Joyce, by e-mail to Emboff on June 8. (Per ref E, Joyce said that Ireland hoped to see a strong, positive economic statement at the Summit, and he expressed confidence that the Commission shared that view.)

The EU Constitution

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17. (C) Emboff took the occasion to seek GOI views regarding the French and Dutch referenda on the EU Constitution, particularly in the context of the GOI's June 6 statement that Ireland would continue preparations for its own referendum. Keown stated that the GOI would evaluate the referendum question on the basis of discussions at the June 16-17 European Council meeting (a view expressed on June 2 by Foreign Minister Ahern). Ireland, having shepherded the Constitution through negotiations during its 2004 EU presidency, continued to believe that the Constitution protected its national interests, while providing a simplified framework for the EU's future internal and external relations. The French and Dutch rejection of the Constitution, mostly for domestic political reasons, was thus a disappointment for the GOI. Keown emphasized, however, that the French and Dutch results did not pose a crisis for the EU and should be considered politically tantamount to the 2003 California recall election. He added that, contrary to European and U.S. reporting about the "end of the European enterprise," the enlargement process would continue, and the EU would continue to function "just fine" under the Nice Treaty.

BENTON